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The holy shield
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THE HOLY SHIELD.

[From "Myrtle Leaves."]

"How sleep the brave who sink to rest,
By all their Country's wishes blest;
When spring with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallowed mould,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod,
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung,
By forms unseen their dirge is sung;
There Honor comes a pilgrim gray,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay,
And freedom shall awhile repair
To dwell a weeping hermit there."

Among those who promptly responded to the first call of our country in her struggle for independence, was Lieut. Mangum, a son of Judge Mangum, of Orange County, North Carolina. He joined the 6th N. C. Regiment under the brave and lament-

ed Colonel Fisher. While the regiment was in the camp of instruction, I visited the beautiful and happy home which he had exchanged for the tented field. The warm, true hearts he had left behind him, were resigned and hopeful—though affection would whisper to them of the trials he would suffer and the dangers he would meet. When I was leaving a loving and pious sister said “Preston tells me that his Bible is too large to be carried in his breast-pocket, and I wish you to procure a small neat Testament for him, before he leaves for Virginia. *Bibles have turned balls and may do so again.*” I promised to comply and then with a smile which betrayed a sister’s love and christian faith, she bade me adieu. In my effort to obtain a suitable Testament I was unsuccessful, and the young soldier kept the Bible as his companion in the dread trials which were before him. A few days only passed away, ere he and his comrades were marshalled in the battle’s front on the Plains of Manassas. When the charge was ordered, he bravely pressed to the onset and with waving sword and thrilling voice cheered and rallied the heroic col-

umn as it staggered before the fiery storm. Ere long while standing by a battery from which the enemy had been driven, he was seen to raise his hand suddenly to his breast then to stagger and fall. A ball had struck him. He was borne from the field to the hospital, and after a slight examination, pronounced mortally wounded. The surgeons, however, discovered that the ball *had struck his Bible*—and its force and direction seemed to have been so affected by it that he was saved from *instant* death. When this was known, how thankful was she who gave him that blessed volume! And how I rejoiced that I could not find a Testament, for that would have been so small that it might not have shielded his heart! In this we saw the hand of the Father and were thankful. But the wound was fatal and when the battle enthusiasm was over, he feared that he would not recover. It was then, that as he looked within his bosom, he realized his need of the sympathy of a greater than man. Amid the confusion and tumult and suffering around him he earnestly looked to the Mercy-Seat and through the merits of his Savior, leaned

his spirit on the bosom of Infinite Love. As his mortal life was ebbing out at that ghastly wound on his breast, eternal life came to him through the mercy of Heaven as it healed the wounds of his soul. Watching by his death-couch I heard words of triumph from his panting lips that it is very sweet to remember. Those words were made more beautiful and eloquent by the spirit-splendor which beamed in his dark eye and spread like celestial radiance over his calm and manly face. He told me that he had been pardoned since he was wounded. "I believe," said he, "that I am numbered among those who are embraced in His mercy." With melting emphasis he quoted some stanzas of poetry—a farewell address to his distant mother. But a short time before he died he turned to his faithful servant and said, "There is a land where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest."—None but those who heard him can ever know what deep and powerful meaning he gave those precious words. He spoke like one who had fled to that refuge and was already reclining on the bosom of

that heavenly rest. It was far more like the voice of experience than the voice of faith.

So talented—so heroic—so kind—it was sad to strangers to see him die—'twas sadder far, for the friend who had joined him in the pleasures of boyhood and shared with him the sacred dreams of youth! He has fallen in the first of his fields, but he has not fallen forever.

“He sleeps his last sleep—he has fought his last battle,” but it can not be said of him, that

“No sound can awake him to glory again;”

for in the day of the victory of the ransomed over the last and greatest foe, he shall be summoned to the shining ranks by the celestial clarion and be crowned with honors which shall be increasing in rapture and glory,

“When victor's wreaths and monarch's gems,
Shall blend in common dust.”

This assurance is sacredly cherished by the bereaved and riven hearts that still

weep by his tomb. There is no genuine balm in any other thought. We would have our friends and kindred fall, if fall they must in their Country's defence, with a name unsullied and honor undimmed; but mere patriotism and daring can not shed the light of immortal hope above their slumbering dust or lead their noble spirits to a home of everlasting happiness. It is well to receive the laurel-wreath for devotion to a just and righteous cause—it is infinitely better to be crowned with the chaplet of Immortality in a land whose honors perish not forever.

There you'll meet him again dear "mother," and
"sisters"

Where the war cry will call him away, never more:
Where the rude sound of battle forever is silenced,
Where you'll know him, and love him as you have
heretofore.

We know that the household is dreary without him,
And the chain is now broken of fond earthly love;
But the links that are severed, will be reunited
In Heaven, sweet Heaven, that bright home above.

DO THEY THINK OF ME AT HOME?

(Tune: "MY OLD KENTUCKY HOME.")

Do they think of me at home, when the sun has left
the skies,

When the happy circle gathers round the hearth,
When the light of love is dancing in the bright, laugh-
ing eyes,

And the aged join with children in their mirth?

Chorus—Home! Sweet Home! Do they think of the
soldier there?

Yes, we think of you by day, and we pray for you by
night,

We cannot, cannot cease to think of you.

Do they think of me at home, when the daily meal is
spread,

When the boys and girls have come to claim their
share?

Do they all think of me, when the words of grace are
said,

And still look sadly at my vacant chair?

Chorus—Home! Sweet Home! Do they think of the
soldier there?

Do they think of me at home, on the blessed Sab-
bath day,

When the servants of the Lord in prayer have
knelt?

When to heaven their hearts ascend, do they then re-
member me,

And ask for me the grace which they have felt ?

Chorus—Home! Sweet Home! Do they think of the
soldier there ?

Yes! we think of you at home, at the early dawn of
day,

When the sun is smiling on us as he parts,

When we work, when we rest, when we sing, when we
pray,

We think of you with loving, longing hearts.

Chorus—Home! Sweet Home! Do they think of the
soldier there ?

All the livelong day—till evening shadows fall—

In joy, in sadness—still we wish for you,

To cheer us in the one, to share with us in all,

With that love so firm, so tender, and so true.

Chorus—Home! Sweet Home! Do they think of the
soldier there ?

O, we think of you at home, and our deepest, war-
mest prayer,

The prayer which is both old, and ever new,

Is that which goes to God for the souls we love so
dear ;

We cannot—cannot cease to think of you.

Chorus—Home! Sweet Home! Do they think of the
soldier there ?

B. M. JR.

Hollinger Corp.
pH 8.5